

TAKE UP SPACE

CENTRAL SAINT MARTINS
2025

**DEAR DYKES, LESBIANS,
BISEXUAL WOMEN, BUTCHES,
FEMMES, TRANS WOMEN,
TRANSFEMMES, TRANS
MEN, TRANSMASCS, TRANS
BUTCHES, BIGENDER PEOPLE,
GENDER NON-CONFORMING
PEOPLE, GENDERQUEER
PEOPLE, ASEXUAL PEOPLE,
AGENDER PEOPLE, NON-
BINARY PEOPLE, GENDER
FLUID PEOPLE AND QUEER
PEOPLE...**

**QUEER SPACES IN LONDON
HAVE RAPIDLY DIMINISHED
SINCE THE 2000S. RECENT
STUDIES SHOW THAT 58%
OF THE CITY'S QUEER
VENUES HAVE CLOSED.*
SPACES CATERING TO QUEER
FEMININITIES AND GENDER-
DIVERSE PEOPLE HAVE
BEEN DISPROPORTIONATELY
AFFECTED. WE INVITE YOU TO
TAKE UP SPACE WITH US.**

*SEE PAGE 10



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Photography by Ulrike Steven & Jet Jet



Photography by Niamh Sutton

INTRODUCTION BY ULRIKE STEVEN

Take Up Space (TUS) is a call to action. It is the name of the informal FLINTA*¹ collective based at Central Saint Martins. We experiment with how we create and hold space in a city where queer venues have all but disappeared. While queer practices and queer theory are increasingly visible in art and design, London has lost over 58% of its queer venues since the 2000s², disproportionately affecting gender-diverse communities. This has left us without a consistent physical presence in the city. TUS is the title of the crowd-

sourced exhibition in the Lethaby Window Gallery at Central Saint Martins, shown during February and March 2024 to coincide with LGBTQIA+ History Month. It began with a crowdsourcing of the words and terms the community uses to describe themselves and the spaces they inhabit—or dream of creating. With support from the Lethaby Gallery, TUS claimed a sliver of institutional space. The words became the backdrop of the window display for a series of rotating interventions, from Perfect Flower and Lesbian Launderette to In Bed with

Pleurotus. Over seven weeks the project unfolded, culminating in Continuous Cruising, when the narrow gallery transformed, for one night only, into a dyke speakeasy.

TUS was conceived as an act of resistance and a claim to spatial justice.

Early conversations with Andrea Luka Zimmermann and Rebecca Ross catalysed the beginnings of an enduring collective that grew to include and be led by students, staff and people beyond CSM.

This zine documents that initiative. It is a record of voices

and interventions, but also a reminder of the reason for the TUS collective's continuing enquiry: "If orientation is a matter of how we reside in space, then sexual orientation might also be a matter of residence; of how we inhabit spaces as well as who or what we inhabit spaces with." — Sara Ahmed.³

Take Up Space was supported by the MA Architecture course but otherwise unfunded—propelled instead by rebellious spirit, collective labour, and joy.

¹ Translates from German to: female, lesbian, intersex, nonbinary, trans, agender & anyone who is not a cis-man, but doesn't fit into these identities.

² Campkin & Marshall, 2017, p. 6

³ Ahmed, 2007, p. 1

What kinds of spaces do you wish there were in London?

FREE TRANS HEALTH
SERVICES / INFORMATION
CENTRES.

SOBER, FREE QUEER
SPACES DAY + NIGHT

TUS_taking up space _prompt_#3

What kinds of spaces do you wish there were in London?

FREE DAY-TIME
INVITING
RELAXED QUEER
SPACES

Somewhere I can be after
work, feel safe, express queerness
have conversations, have a
coffee. Be alone if I want to

TUS_taking up space _prompt_#3

These are some early TUS members' responses to the question "what kind of spaces do you wish there were in London?" We later ran a public facing workshop and used the responses to create our first exhibition.



CROWDSOURCING



Photography by Niamh Sutton & Ulrike Steven

CROWDSOURCING

YAS SMITH

In order to metaphysically claim space, you have to take over some real-world space... Which is exactly what we did to crowdsource for the opening of the TUS exhibition.

Getting people interested is a hard thing to do. We decided the best way to do this was to ask directly what people thought. We asked three questions on space and identity, printing these on very attractive coloured cards. We set up tables outside the exhibition window with some of our examples already on display. The printed cards were then written, drawn, and re-purposed by whoever came to visit us during that cold evening in February.

What came out of it varied massively, as do all conversations regarding space and identity. Some people wanted sober, comfy space (likely inspired by spending the whole evening writing

outside). Others wanted heavy duty boots smashing all over the town, standing "tall, and proud". Spaces were either recognisable, such as saunas, or not yet in existence - like a gay commune.

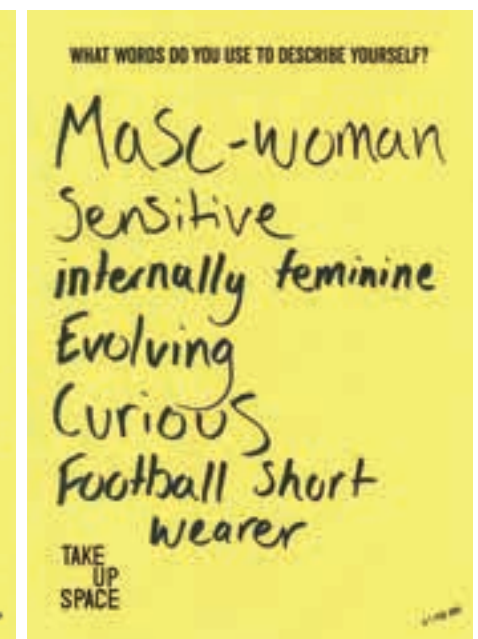
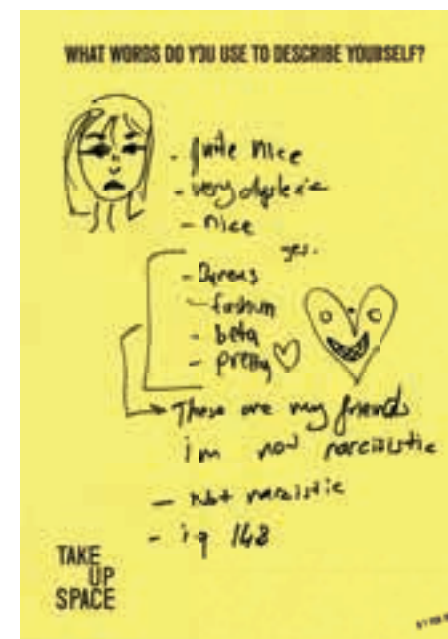
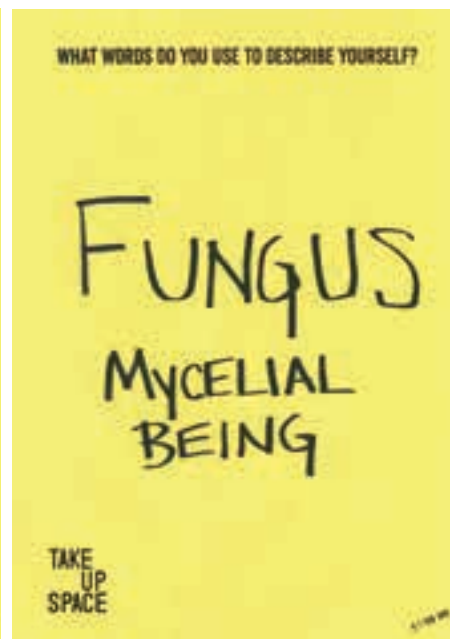
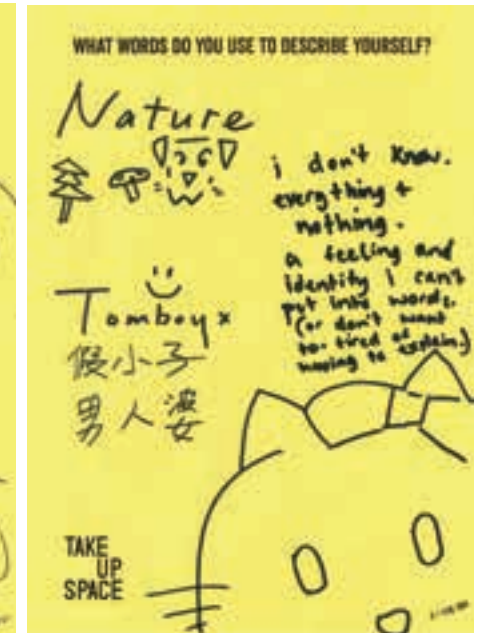
Even the format of the things we gathered from individuals change. Drawings were made! Some better than others, but still representative of how words cannot always satisfy meaning. And we're talking about space right? So who cares if a manifesto is being drawn or written?

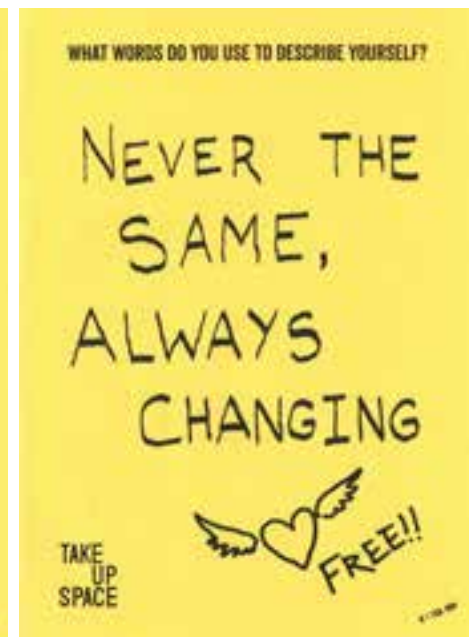
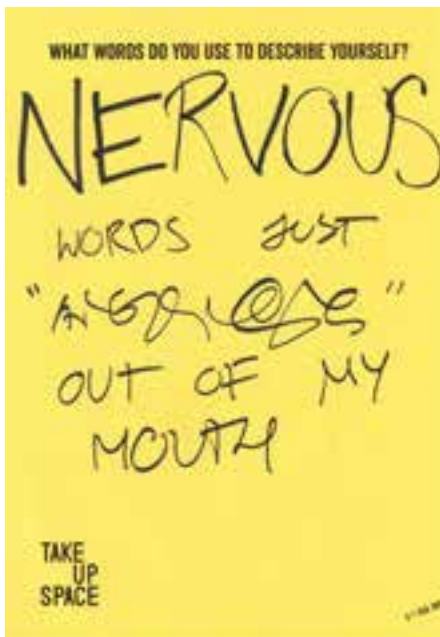
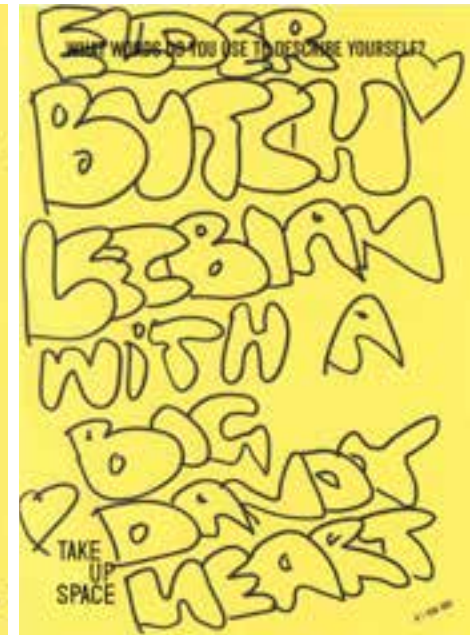
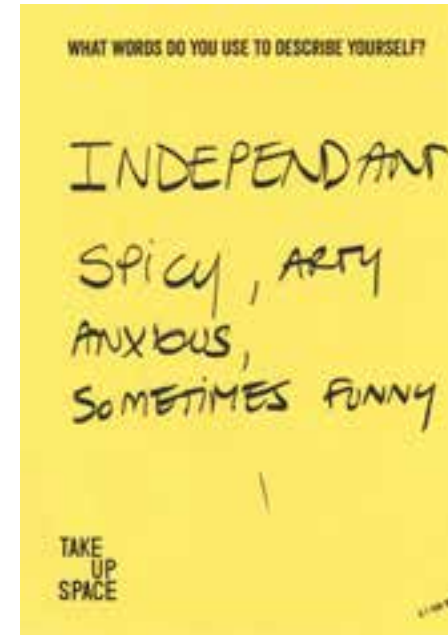
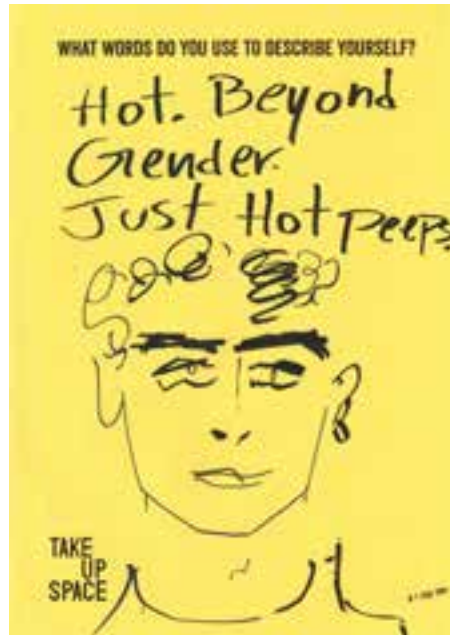
But when looking at it, everything that was put down to paper speaks of the innumerable ways we feel robbed of a third space. As the crowdsourcing evening showed us, the window display was never going to be enough. Even on that first night, we spilled out into public space*.

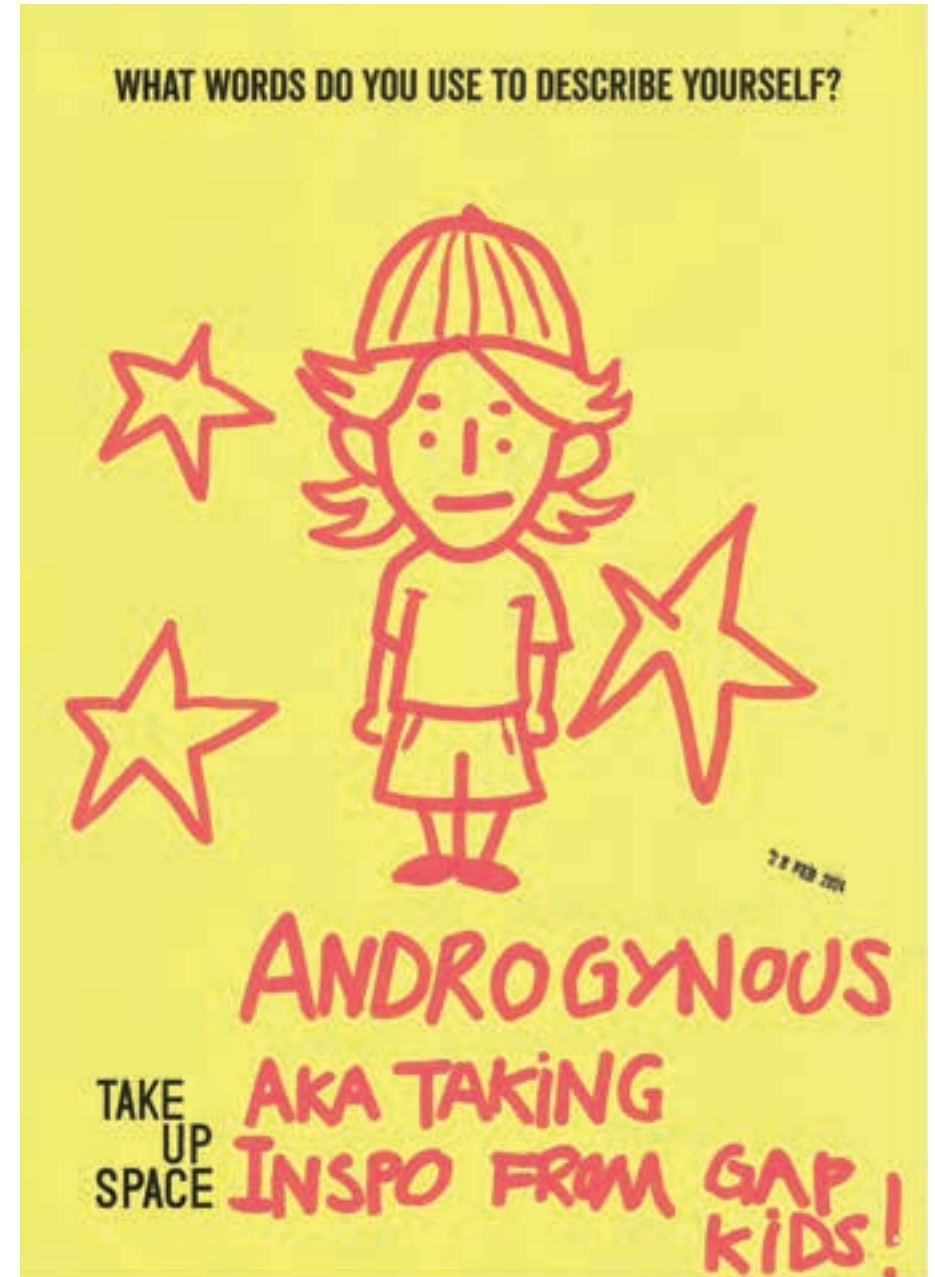
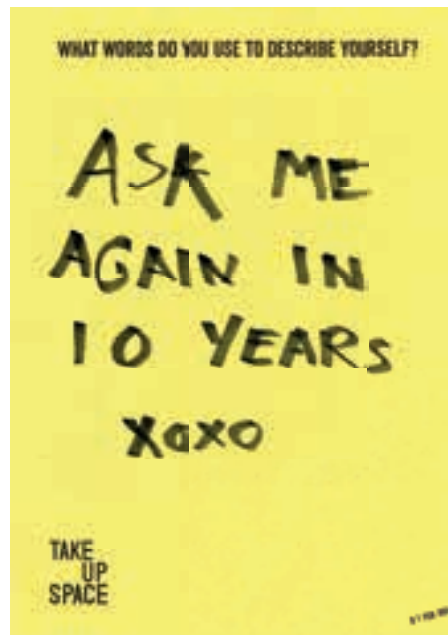
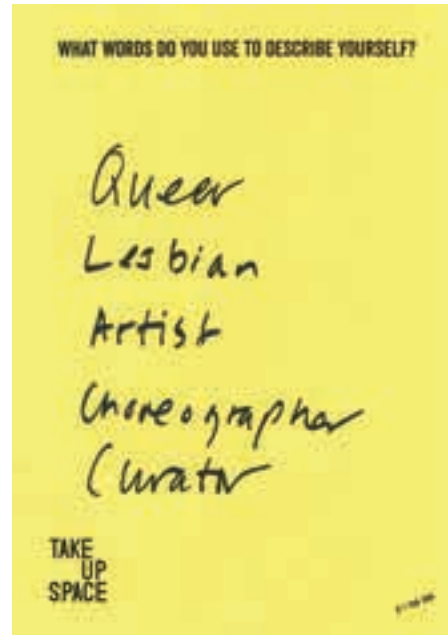
*Technically, Kings Cross is a privately owned public space...

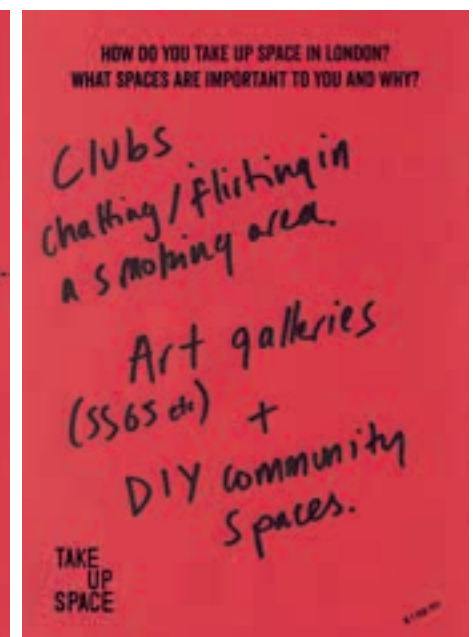
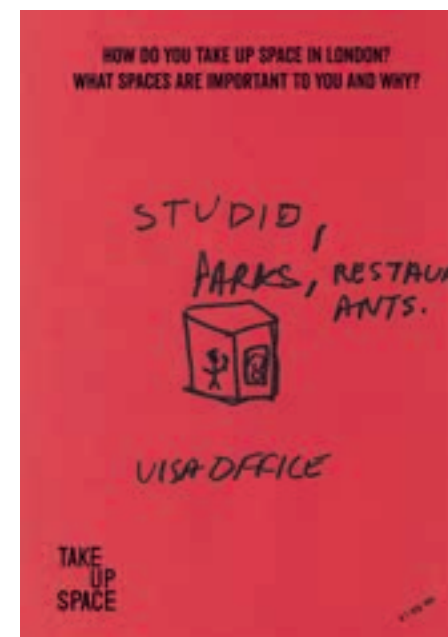
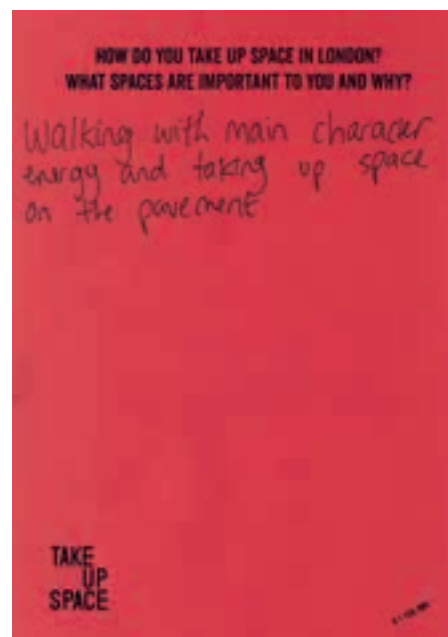
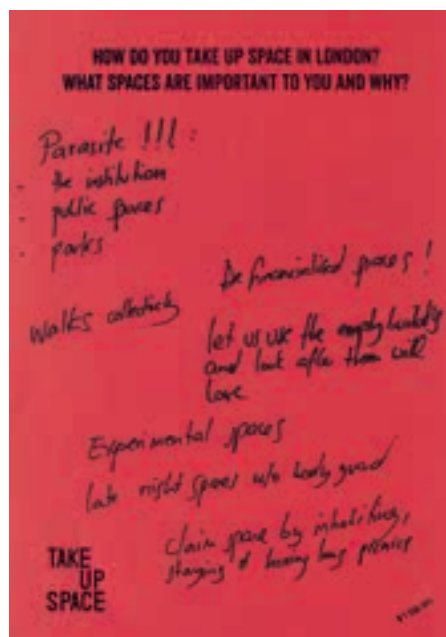
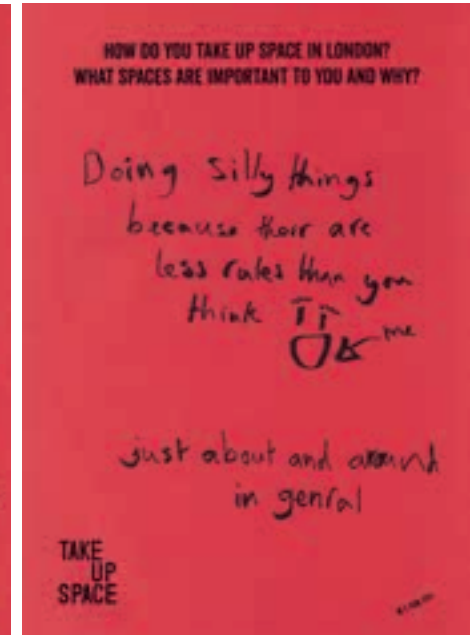
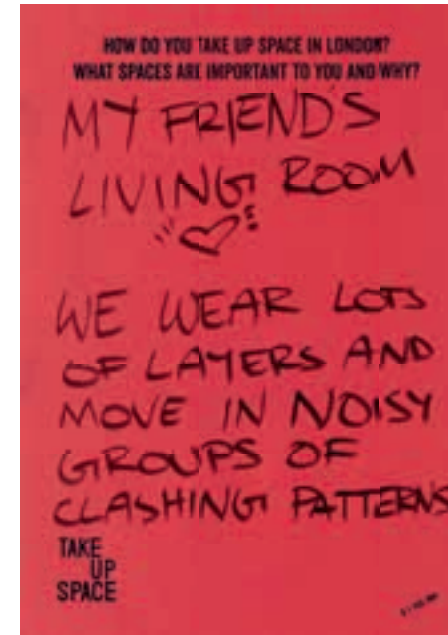
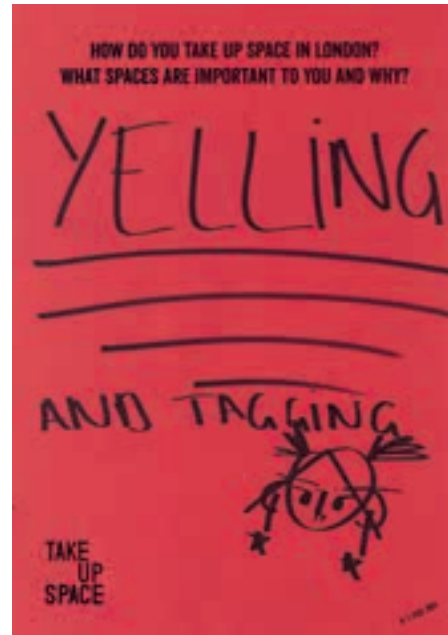
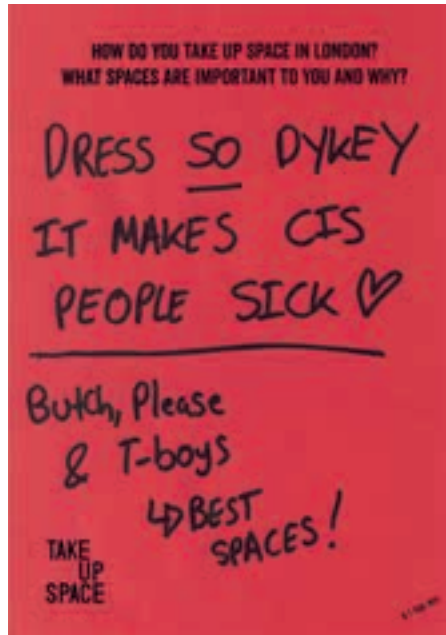


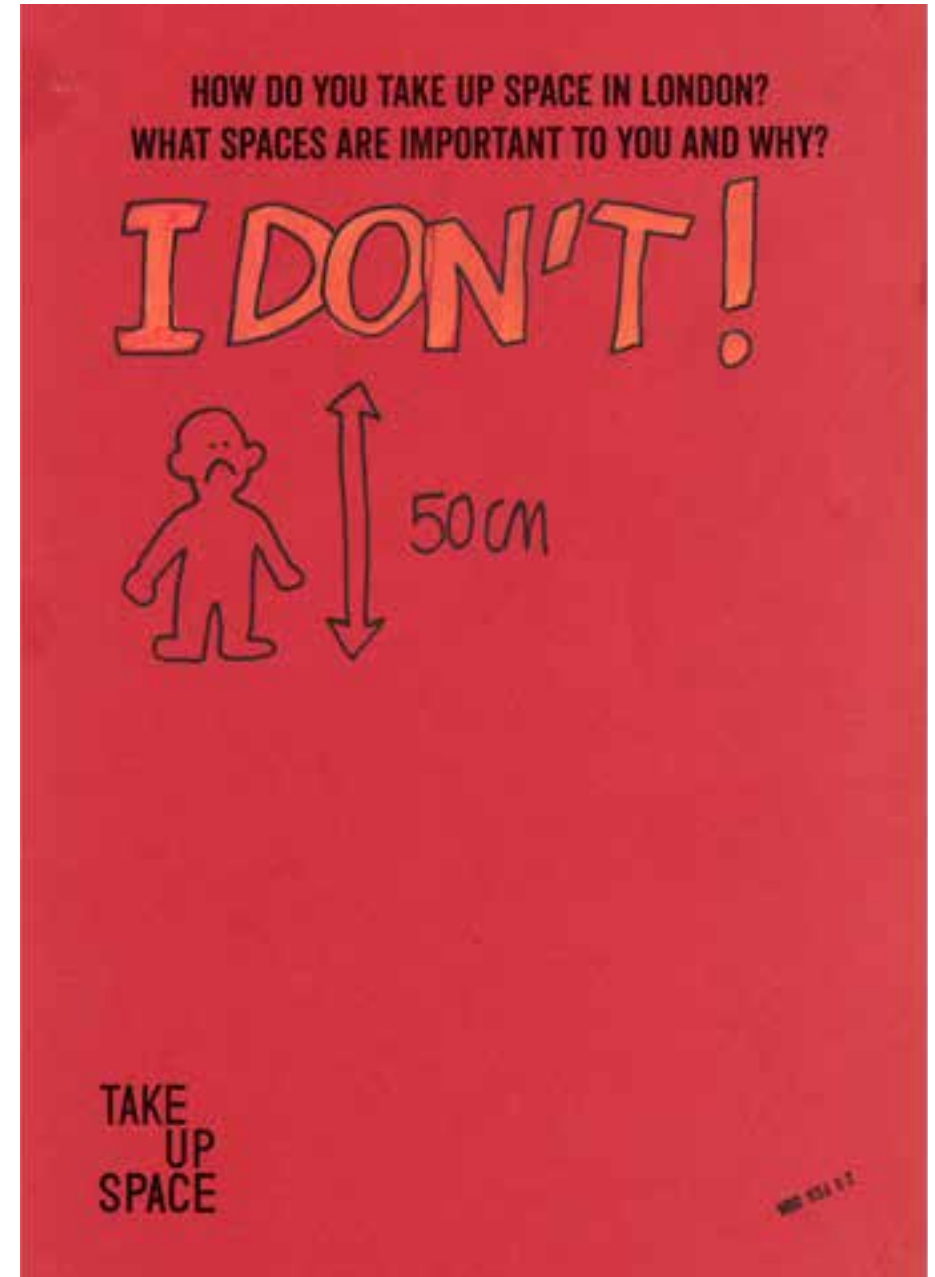
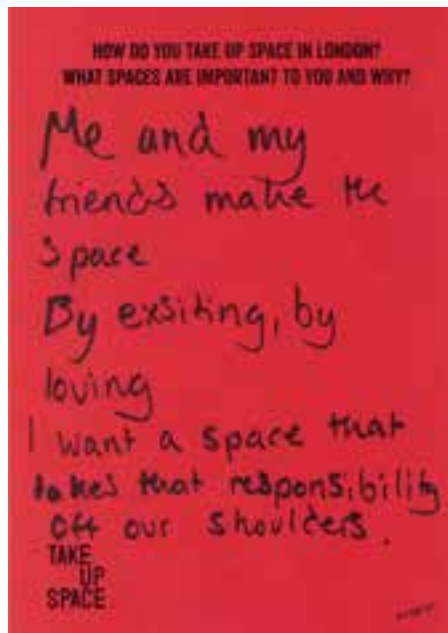
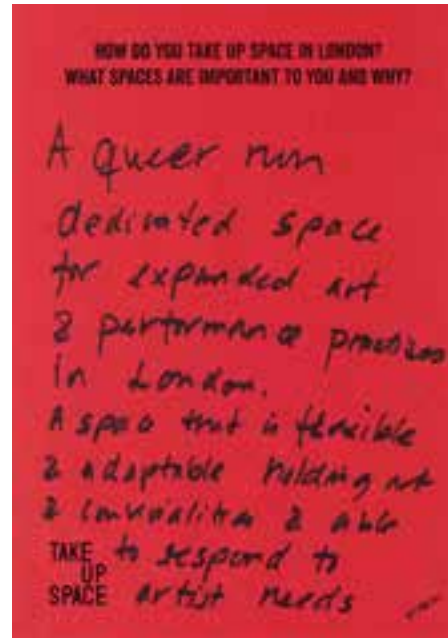
Photography by Niamh Sutton

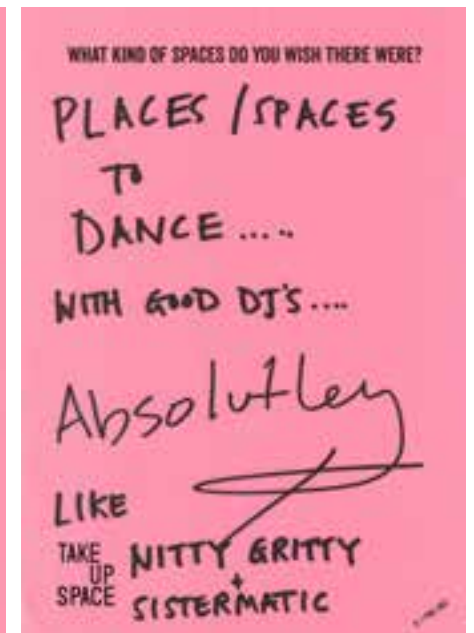
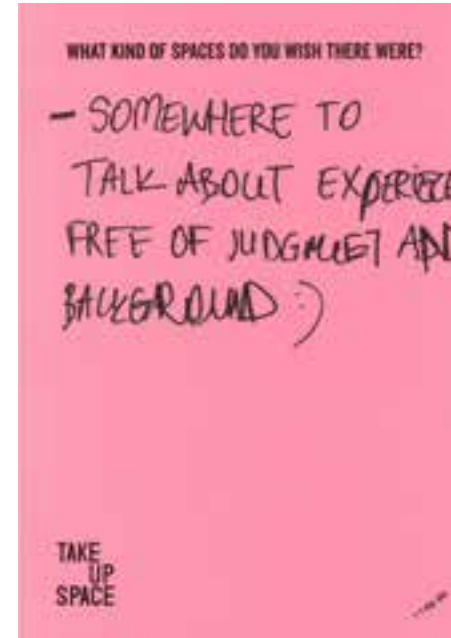
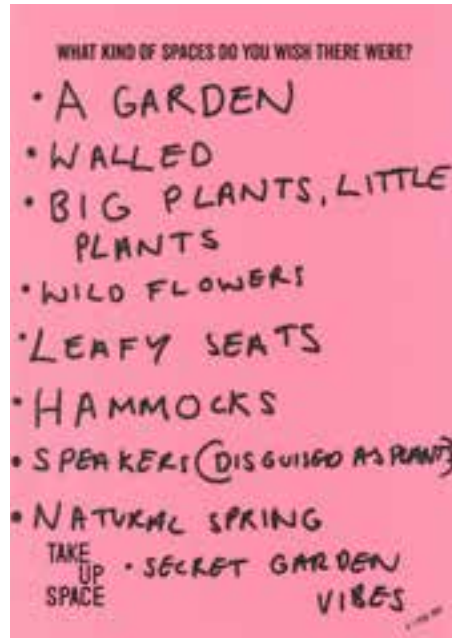


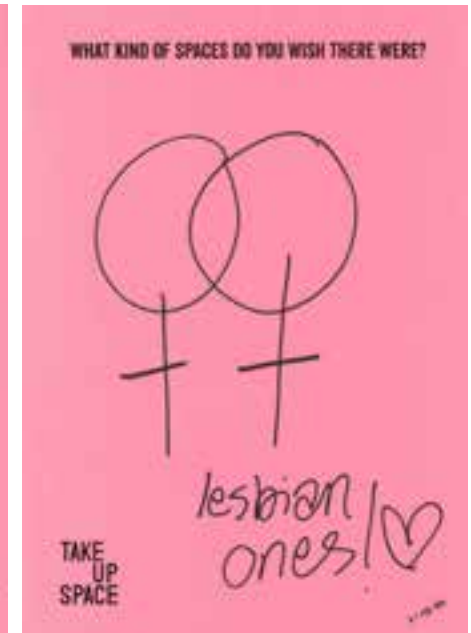
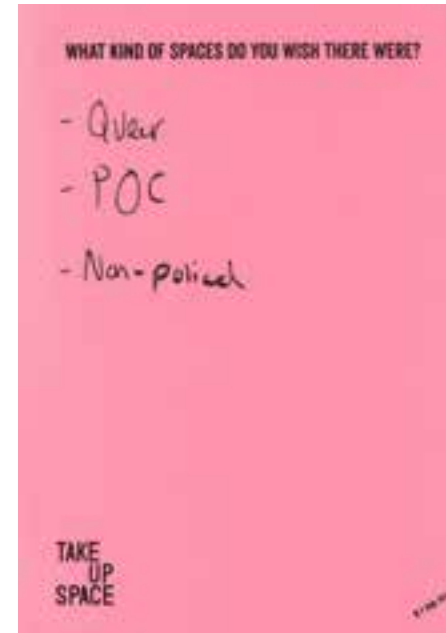
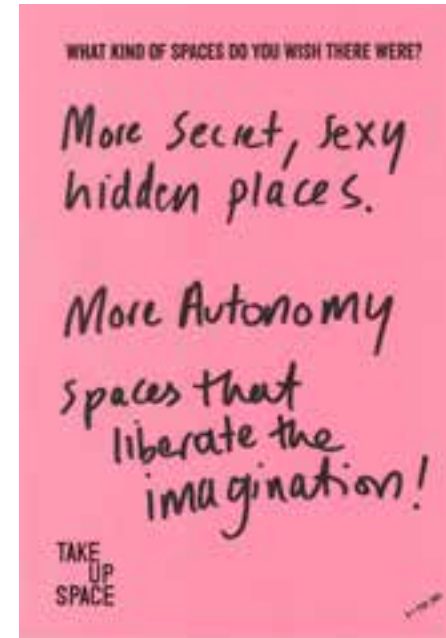


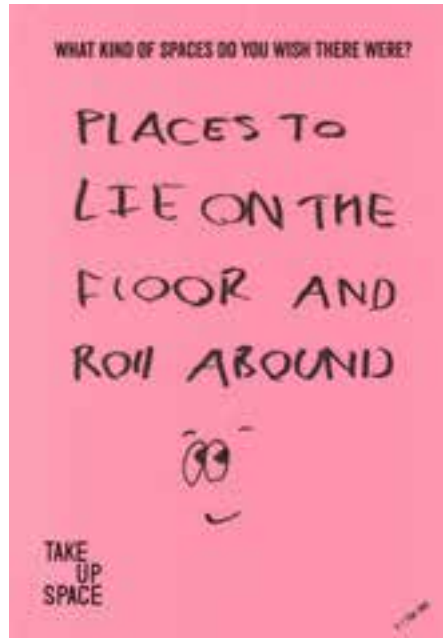














THE PERFECT FLOWER



Photography by Henri T

PERFECT FLOWER

ULRIKE STEVEN / WHAT IF PROJECTS

Perfect Flower is a performative action by what if: projects with a multi-disciplinary collective of queer practitioners and young people in Stratford, exploring "safety for women, girls and gender-diverse people in public spaces."

The project began with a search for belonging — for ways in which young people could feel visible, safe and connected in their local environment. Empowered by the notion that the world is queer, our collective enquiry grew from the fact that over 90% of flowering plant species are hermaphroditic, carrying both male and female reproductive organs. Biologists call these perfect flowers.

Inspired by this understanding, young individuals crafted sculptural body parts to transform themselves into "a queer plant family." In performing together, they took up space, made themselves

visible and, in doing so, reoriented public space towards the wild, untamed and chaotic as essential forces for life and survival.

Following the performative intervention in the Pudding Mill Lane area in November 2023, the cardboard costumes and staged photography were gathered in the window of the Take Up Space initiative.

Perfect Flower was developed in collaboration with young LGBTQ+ people and LB Newham's Youth Empowerment Services, choreographer Heidi Rustgaard, photographer Henri T, and architects Alexandros Xenophontos and Ulrike Steven from what if: projects. The project was commissioned by the London Legacy Development Corporation.



Photography by Jet Jet & Henri T



LESBIAN LAUNDERETTE



Photography by Ulrike Steven & Severin Bull

LESBIAN LAUNDERETTE

LIL FLASHMAN

The lack of permanent LGBTQIA+ venues in London has meant that queer people have always had to be resourceful. For many of us, our bodies form the architecture of the spaces we inhabit. In this iteration of TUS, we entered the Lesbian Launderette: a world of queer domesticity that attempted to reimagine what an urban idyll might look like if we lived in a city where it was common to see queer bodies in shared domestic spaces.

The exhibition relied on clothing donated by members of the collective that represented an affirming moment in their queer life. The only things we bought were a few plywood rods from a DIY shop, which were hung with washing twine to arrange the clothes and accessories at staggered heights. We printed out a big sign in a fifties style cursive font, with a baby blue, bubbly background pegged to a metal airer at the front of the

gallery. The space transformed into a long back garden filled with all of our friends' clothes. Drawing on a sometimes romanticised vision of lesbian squatting culture in 1980s London, we found a moment of shared queer domesticity. Clothing became a way to remap gender and its relations to space.

Like a basket full of washing, the clothing donated varied in size, shape and story. Some pieces hung heavy with a sense of nostalgia and sentimentality, others were lighter and cruder in tone. Items included: a first pair of boxers bought from the TK Maxx in Lewisham shopping centre; a hand printed t-shirt with a pink neon tag proudly stating "I had the best gay sex in Ipswich"; a Bedford Town FC football scarf; and a three-piece pin stripe suit.



Photography by Sara Vanore Rewkiewicz

IN BED WITH PLEUROTUS

SARA VANORE REWKIEWICZ X OYSTER FUNGI

Say it: 'Oh! Pleu-rOh!-tus!'

Meet *Pleurotus*, aka Oyster fungi. Confession: For far too long, I said their name very wrong. Not that it matters much to them but... The middle vowel has an orgasmic feel, and it seems serendipitous that the last three letters are none other than T-U-S. *Pleurotus*, you are destined to TAKE UP SPACE.

These resilient fungi surprise me often, daily I reckon, in the most unpredictable and unknowable way that only more-than-humans can. It appears fitting, then, to reflect on the TUS fungi-takeover with a couple of favourite 'Oh-inducing' moments...

1. Getting Sweaty In Here

If you saw the exhibition, you know *Pleurotus* are experts at sweating the journey. Their condensation-filled boxes obscuring our view are a welcome attraction. All that wet, messy fun means they

have plenty of moisture to help stimulate fast-growing fruiting bodies and some glorious, glistening gills.

2. Bearded & Beautiful

No doubt, *Pleurotus* give a stunning queer performance. Believe me when I say, I did not do this—this gorgeous mycelial beard you see on Top Bun Gym Barbie (bottom right) is graciously thanks to them. *Pleurotus*, you all got the assignment.

A Special Thank You

To Ulrike Steven and Andrea Luka Zimmerman for getting this shy human involved in TUS, and all the anonymous, crowd-sourced community messages—it's your voices who inspired the selection of personal objects for our fellow, queer, non-binary companions to grow from.

Fancy Finding Your Mycelial Match? Get in touch for mycelial match-making and give your gift to the fungi! Find me at: @in_bed_with_pleurotus



Photos are part of Sara Vanore Rewkiewicz's PhD research and were taken at different times during the TUS exhibition period to show *Pleurotus* at varying stages of growth.



CONTINUOUS CRUISING



Photography by Marf Summers & Niamh Sutton

CONTINUOUS CRUISING

MARF SUMMERS

"Continuous Cruising" was an installation and evening event that drew a connection between the peripatetic (moves around from place to place) nature of houseboats on the nearby Regents Canal, and dyke spaces in London today. The thin, narrowboat-like window gallery was reimagined as a travelling dyke speakeasy, calling attention to the untethered nature of the spaces we call home. With the decline of static, dedicated queer spaces (of all kinds) across the last 15 years in London, dyke spaces have become unmoored - popping up and popping down across the city, hosted monthly in sympathetic venues, shifting in place and time.

Passers by can glimpse the activity inside only through paper porthole windows, highlighting the double bind of visibility- we must make ourselves visible and legible to be heard, at the risk of exposing

ourselves to homophobia and transphobia. Our spaces are precious- "Continuous Cruising" rejects the commodification of queerness into spectacle, and refuses the entitlement those outside of our community can feel to accessing queer spaces. The porthole windows use the playful motif of a strap-on harness O-Ring as a jumbo-size framing device, abstracted enough to only speak to those "in-the-know".

The installation marked the finale of the Take Up Space project, with a one-night-only party on the "towpath" and inside the "boat". As participants gathered in the dyke boat they were asked: Can strengths/ opportunities be found in this state of motion? What future do we want for our spaces? What is a "permanent" space after all? Conversations and thoughts were recorded on the back of custom cardboard drinks coasters.



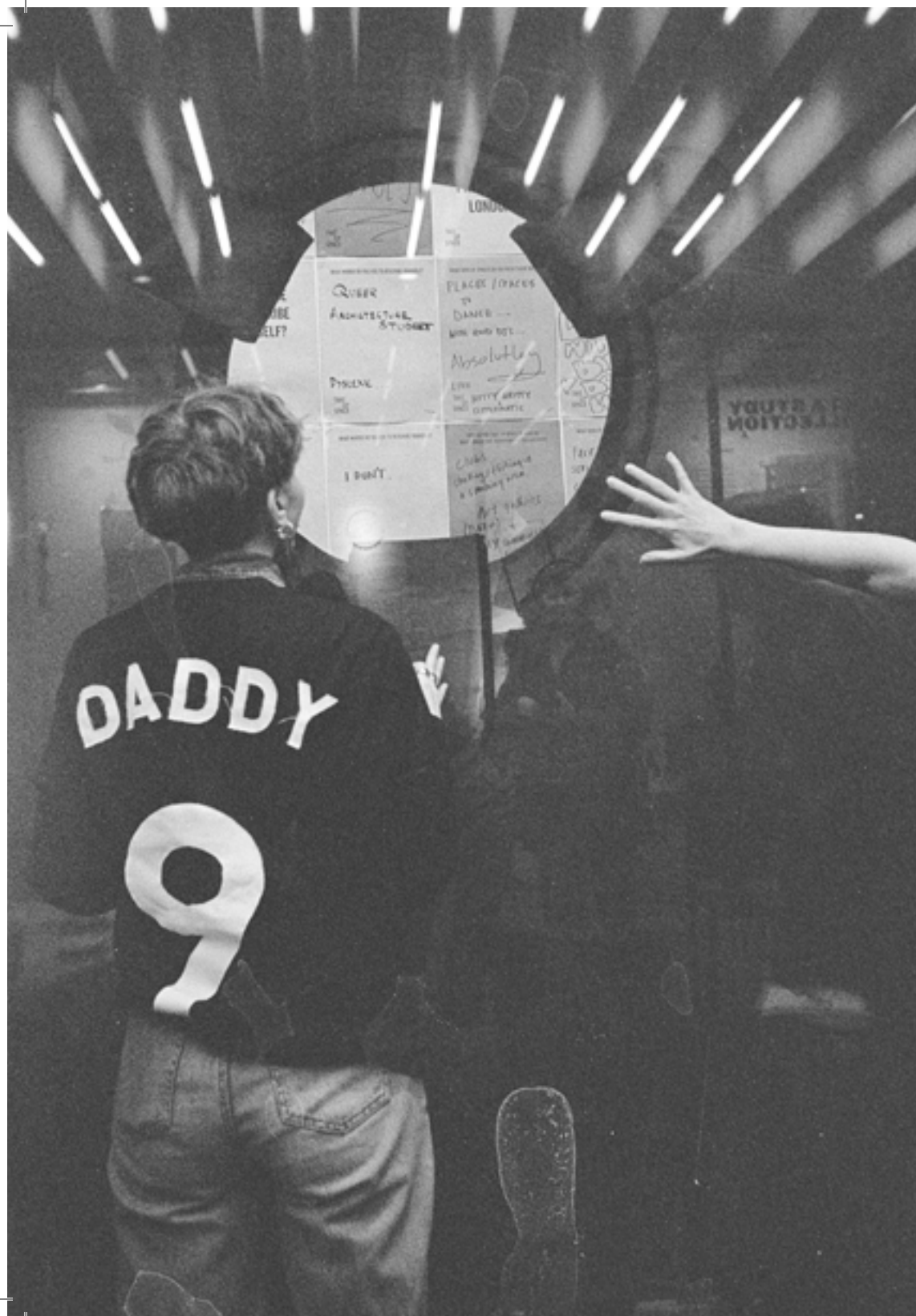
Photography by Niamh Sutton & Marf Summers



Photography by Marf Summers



Photography by Lil Flashman





Also w/ friends
let online make
community sharing
INTERGENERATIONAL
DYKE/LESBO SPACES
- CAFES & SOCIAL
SPACES. MAYBE COFFEE
WOULD BE LESS
TERRY IF WE WERE
LESS CONSERVATIONALLY
SCIT?!

Permanence
is an illusion -
we create radical space
where we we go - we
live on a middle of
radical dykes squabbling
caring, picking, creating
and dreaming
v v v

Accessible
space - no
compromise on
this - no "we
are sorry"
"we are trying"

WHATEVER
PERMANENTLY
IT IS...
QUEER SPACE
SHOULD FEEL
LIKE HOME

MY STRAP ON

There is
strength in
movement + a migration/
resurgence of community
it means that the
people are at the heart -
Not just the
location

WHAT FRUSTRATES
ME IS STRAIGHT
INFILTRATION! QUEER
SPACES ARE COMMONLY
SIEGED BY 'STRAIGHT
TRENDS'. QUEER IS NOT
A CUTE TREND YOU CAN
INFILTRATE. THE WHOLE
WORLD IS STRAIGHT LEAVE
QUEER SPACES
ALONE.

Permanence
lies in the
SPIRIT
of dyke spaces!

Give us
the dyke
bath houses for
God's Sake.

PERMANENCE IS IN
THE STRUCTURE & FAMILIARITY
A COMMUNITY THAT IS CREATED
FROM SEEING THE SAME PEOPLE
OFTEN (ONCE A WEEK,
EVERY WEEK, ETC.)

Queer Jewish Third Spaces
• Shul
• Mikveh
• Jewish
Store
• Bookstore
• Cafes
• Museum
needed

Queer is transitory,
it is the act of a
movement against, not a
destination by that
transience of the new.



**U WANNA PLAY FOR
MY TEAM?**



*Scarf by Kate McAleer
Photography by Ulrike Steven*

U WANNA PLAY FOR MY TEAM?

KATE MCALEER

The collective asked me to consider what queer space I take up in London. Outside my own home the obvious answer was “the football pitch”.

There is a thriving culture of grassroots football in this city. In the past it was the definition of a (very cis!) “male-dominated field”. Now, more than ever, people from traditionally marginalised genders are claiming their own space on the pitch, showing up in team colours to run around and have fun; get sweaty, feel seen and kick some balls in the embrace of their own loving community.

I asked a handful of queer footballers I know how they identified. Among the answers were “Daddy” and “Fun Dyke”. The whole TUS premise reminded me of a conversation

I had with the founders of grassroots club The Oaks FC, when they described wanting to play and not knowing where to go:

“We couldn’t find a place... So we made our own.”

Using second hand textiles to stitch these words into custom shirts and a scarf was a different type of play. An attempt to give a glimpse to the non-footballers out there - how much fun we are having, on a patch of grass in London somewhere, probably near you! And if you want to play too... what shall we write on the back of your shirt?



Photography by Kate McAleer & Niamh Sutton



CREATURES FROM THE QUEERCRIP LAGOON



Photography by Scar Barclay & Eva Barnett

CREATURES FROM THE QUEERCRIP LAGOON

SCAR BARCLAY

As TUS evolved, we moved beyond the window and collaborated with The DisOrdinary Architecture Project. The result was *Creatures*, a costumed symposium for London Festival of Architecture. It emerged from the lagoon through a shared frustration. The increasingly toxic language around trans, queer, crip, disabled, neurodiverse and Deaf experience had become deeply othering and projected us as strange or deceitful.

Hosted by Central Saint Martins' Queer School of Thought (QSoT), we used this public platform to challenge this paternalism — where we are talked about, rather than talked to. We engaged in these difficult conversations aided by netted ruffles, embellished hospital gowns and creative gaffer tape. Making a space for us, and the

complexity our experience and knowledge deserves. This wasn't about being in agreement but forming a space to be vulnerable and critical.

At the end, we publicly took up space, collectively resting and gathering in Granary Square. A privately-owned public space, this square has its own rules on who it welcomes and desires, and in particular who and how they can rest. We lay there, conspicuously in our ruffles, for a very peaceful twenty minutes.

For *Creatures*, we created a short film: *Invitations from the Queercrip Universe* (2024), a compilation of four filmed interviews with practitioners working at the intersections of queercrip identities and practice. More information on *Invitations* is available on page 68.



Photography by Eva Barnett & Pavan Sidhu

INVITATION FROM THE QUEERCRIP UNIVERSE

INVITED IN WITH
OPENNESS, KINDNESS
AND A WILLINGNESS
TO LISTEN, TO KNOW
WHEN TO PAUSE,
REFLECT AND RECEIVE
FEEDBACK ON HOW TO
MAKE ACCOMMODATION
CHANGES.

INVITED IN TO SHARE
THEir STORIES
ALONGSIDE ASKING THE
EVERYONE TO UNDERSTAND
AND FORM THEIR FEELINGS
SHOULD LEAD TO UNDER
YOUR HAND AND HAVE
NEW IDEAS THAT EXTEND
TO OUR EVER CHANGING
CONTEXT.

INVITATION FROM THE QUEERCRIP UNIVERSE

- Promoting diversity in all layers, making sure that our core underlying/understanding "norm" becomes prevalent
- Encouraging shared experiences against normative society to fight a united front even when those experiences are unique to each individual
- Allowing those experiences freely to be shared, but also to be turned into concrete actions & policies and not just stand for a "symbolic" idea of diversity

INVITATION FROM THE QUEERCRIP UNIVERSE

SIT COMFORTABLY
SIT IN SILENCE
NO MORE BINARIES, ONLY
CONTINUITIES
VISIBILITY AND INVISIBILITY
IDENTITY THROUGH DISIDENTITY

INVITATION FROM THE QUEERCRIP UNIVERSE

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS MISSING?
WHERE DO WE START + HOW CAN WE HELP MORE?
IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT INCLUSIVE TOILETS + LIFTS.
HOW IT COULD BE IMPROVED?
DISCUSSIONS ON SOLUTIONS OR EXAMPLES/ATTEMPTS
IN HISTORY WITH INCLUSIVE/DIVERSE ARCHITECTURE OR
METHODOLOGIES E.G. THE DEAF PUNK NIGHT CLUB.
FOR INSPIRATION
HOW DO YOU WANT TO BE INVITED INTO THE SPACE
WITHOUT JUDGEMENT. WITH OPTIONS FOR PRIVACY?
LESS OPEN PLAN. MORE COLOUR + ASYMMETRICITY.
SPACES FOR REST.

Participants were asked to write responses to the Invitations from the Queercrip Universe film, asked "How would you like to be invited?"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CREDITS

Take Up Space would like to thank everyone who has been a part of the collective, and all those who have participated in our workshops. This zine owes its existence to many people working in creative collaboration.

TUS exhibition credits:

Initiation & organisation:
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Graphic design: Severin Bull
Lethaby Gallery producer:
Mia Cormack

Exhibition contributors:

Rory Bakker-Marshall, Severin Bull, Lil Flashman, Eliza Grosvenor-Camille, Jet Jet, Lalin Kavaklioglu, Kate McAleer, Sif Nielson, Sara Vanore Rewkiewicz, Rebecca Ross, Yasmin Smith, Martha Summers, Niamh Sutton, Ava Sutherland, what if: projects, Astrid Winstanley, and Andrea Luka Zimmermann.

Zine editorial design:

Severin Bull

Contributors and Authors:

Scar Barclay, Lil Flashman, Kate McAleer, Yas Smith, Ulrike Steven, Marf Summers and Sara Vanore Rewkiewicz.

Main Photographers:

Jet Jet, Niamh Sutton & Henri T.

In Bed With Pleurotus

Sara Vanore Rewkiewicz's PhD is Supervised by Heather Barnett (Director of Studies), Andrea Luka Zimmerman (Co-Supervisor) and Caterina Albano (Co-Supervisor).

Invitations from the Queercrip Universe (2024)

Featured Marf Summers, Jos Boys, James Barclay and Ben Alderson-Day. Each of them either had lived-experience or was leading work dedicated to exploring lived-experience, or both.

Film credits:

Scar Barclay (event, film editing and recording), Lauren Dennis (event, film editor and outfits), Lil Flashman (event, film editor), Yas Smith (event, film editor), Severin Bull (advisor for interview questions), Louie Thornton and Fin Atkin (prop-making), Ulrike Steven (outfits), Kleanthis Kyriakou (BSL coordination), Pip Barclay (event filming), Eva Barnett and Pavan Sidhu (event photography).

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